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Blackwood Presbyterian Church.

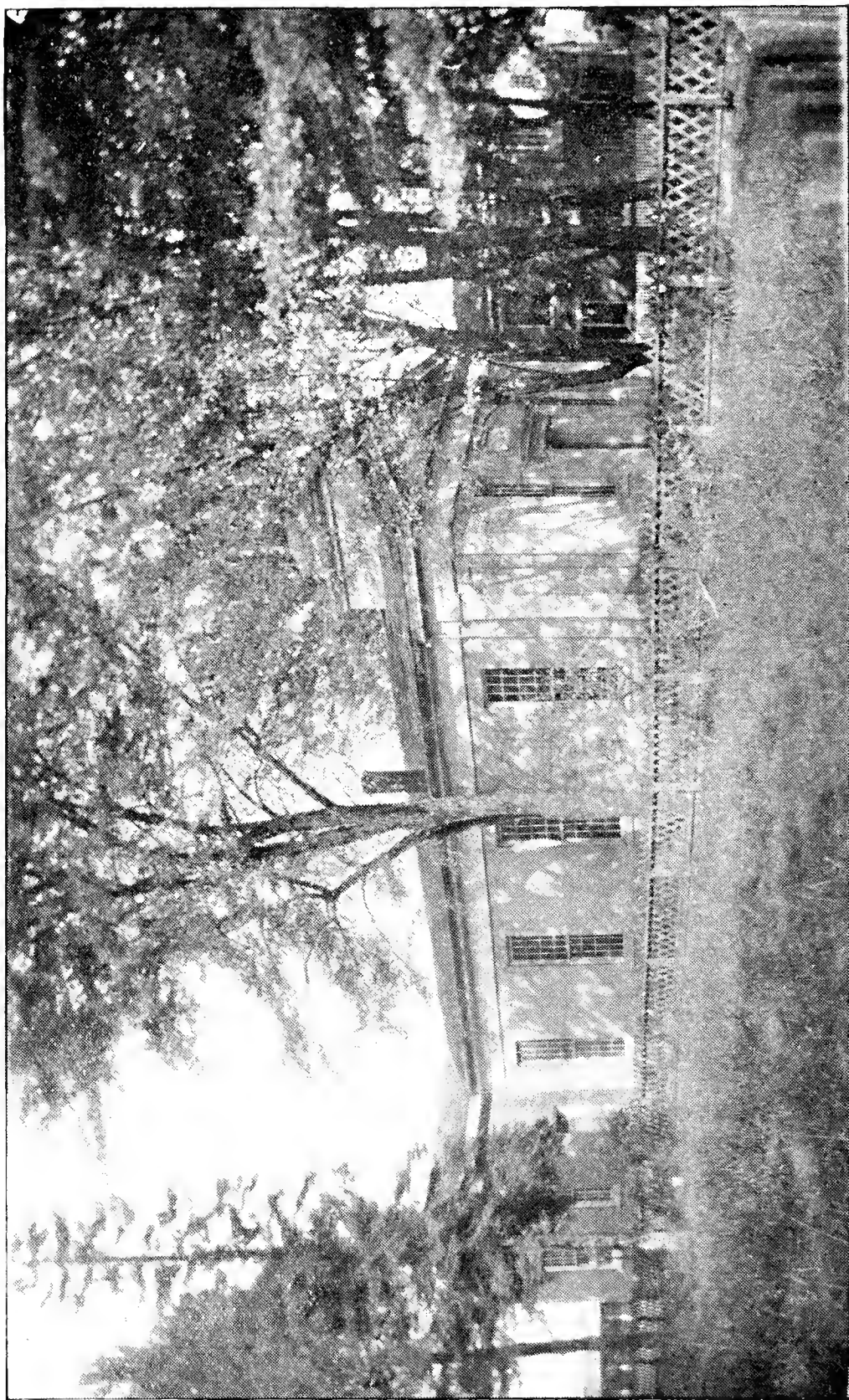
1751-1898

HISTORICAL REVIEW

By

REV. F. R. BRACE, D. D.

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BLACKWOOD, N. J., ERECTED 1848, ENLARGED 1861. LECTURE ROOM BUILT 1879.

HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF
THE FIRST
Presbyterian Church

OF
BLACKWOOD, N. J.

A SERMON BY REV. F. R. BRACE, D. D.

DELIVERED AT THE CLOSE OF HIS PASTORATE
OF THIRTY-ONE YEARS,

March 1st, 1898.

CAMDEN, N. J.
SINNICKSON CHEW & SONS, PRINTERS.
1898.

burdened with this world's goods, but the men and the women were strong, sturdy, liberty-loving men and women. Judging from such names as Blackwood, Fisher, McCulloch, Flanigan, some of them were either Scotch or Scotch Irish. Others were from Wales, as the Morgan family, and others were from England. But they were all of the stuff necessary to lay foundations of liberty, and truth, and integrity, and strength for the future to build upon. They were determined to make a living for themselves in the almost unbroken wilderness, and at the same time to maintain their spiritual life by the observance of the public worship of God. We cannot tell when these early settlers first united in their worship, or where they held their first services. No doubt these services were held in some private dwelling, perhaps in a log cabin; and as John Blackwood came from Presbyterian Scotland, no doubt they sang the old Scotch version of the Psalms to such tunes as Martyrs, Elgin, Dundee and French—good psalms and good tunes for strong, sturdy, pious souls. We know that a Presbyterian congregation existed before November 7th, 1750, because on that day a call was presented by the congregation at the head of Timber Creek, (now Blackwood), conjointly with Woodbury, for the services of Mr. Benjamin Chesnutt, but how long before we cannot tell. My own opinion is that the people were called together to join in worship as soon as Mr. Blackwood settled here, which was in 1741. It is very evident that he, being an earnest, staunch, whole-souled, kirk-loving Presbyterian Christian, accustomed to worship God regularly in the kirk in his old home, would not be long in any place without trying to gather around him all those whose hearts longed for the worship of God in the sanctuary. However, the only historic fact of a positive nature that we have is, that a congregation of Presbyterians was here November 7th, 1750, and that they united with the congregation at Woodbury in giving a call to Mr. Benjamin Chesnutt, which call was presented to him at a meeting of the Pres-

bytery of New Brunswick on that day in Philadelphia, but was not accepted by him until May 22d, 1751, at a meeting of the Presbytery at Neshaminy. Mr. Chesnutt was one of the six who constituted the first class to graduate from the College of New Jersey, (now Princeton University), November, 1748. After he accepted the call, steps were taken for his ordination. His examination took place in Philadelphia, July 17, by a committee composed of Revs. Gilbert Tennent, Richard Treat, Charles Beatty, John Campbell, Andrew Hunter and Daniel Lawrence, and on the first Tuesday of September following he was ordained at Woodbury by the imposition of hands and prayer, and installed pastor of the congregations of Woodbury and Timber Creek.

The people soon began to feel the necessity for a house of worship and "proposed to use their joint endeavors to erect a house or Presbyterian Church for public worship in some convenient place." Mr. Blackwood sold them, October 18, 1751, for a merely nominal amount, two shillings and sixpence, one acre of land upon which to build the house, this acre being a part of the present cemetery. Being an energetic Scotch Presbyterian, he was foremost in the work of building. The trustees to whom the ground was conveyed for the use of the congregation were Michael Fisher, Esq., Joseph Hedger, Peter Cheesman, John McColloch, Lazarus Pine and Henry Thorn. The deed says: "Whereas, a considerable number of religiously disposed persons of the Presbyterians, and such as adhere to them, united at present under the instruction of Mr. Benjamin Chesnutt, propose to erect a house of worship;" also, "The principles of the congregation are to be consonant to the Westminster Confession of Faith. There must be no separatists or dissenters." Subscriptions were obtained and Mr. Blackwood was employed to carry on the work of building. The church was erected near what we call Main Road, the pulpit being over the spot where Mr. Chesnutt is buried, and was finished the next year, but the peo-

ple were slow to pay their subscriptions and so Mr. Blackwood carried a complaint to Presbytery five years afterward that he suffered much in his worldly interest by the refusal of many persons to pay their subscriptions. Presbytery listened to his complaint and sent Rev. Daniel Lawrence to Timber Creek to preach and endeavor to get the people to pay their subscriptions, especially as the house was for the public use of the society and erected at their desire. Mr. Lawrence's sermon must have been a very effective one as there are no further complaints by Mr. Blackwood. The church was thus put into a condition to carry on its work. The building was made of logs, but the worship was as acceptable to God as that which goes up from the stateliest cathedral. That old building stood until 1801. Mr. Chesnutt labored here for a little more than two years, building up the church, but failed to meet the requirements of the people in some matters, especially in neglecting to call them together for the purpose of selecting proper church officers and thus put them into what they called a "church state." Mr. Chesnutt was also dissatisfied because there were great deficiencies in his support and so he asked the Presbytery of Abington* May 17, 1753, to liberate him. The consideration of the matter was deferred to a meeting held June of the same year, the congregation being notified to attend and give reasons why he should not be liberated. At this meeting, after hearing all parties, the Presbytery ordered the church to pay all arrearages and then liberated Mr. Chesnutt and gave him liberty to accept of a call to exercise his ministry elsewhere. He remained here until November, 1753, when he removed to New Providence, Montgomery county, Pa., at first giving one-half of his time to that field and the remaining half to two other places, the Forks of the Delaware, now Allentown, and Mt. Bethel, Pa., and Tehicken, afterwards called Tinicum, in Bucks county, Pa. From this time

* The Presbytery of Abington was set off from the Presbytery of New Brunswick in the fall of 1751, and remained in existence until 1758.

until April 8, 1767, the congregation was dependent upon supplies, who gave intermittent services. In the fall of 1753, Rev. Nehemiah Greenman preached here one Sabbath. In 1754, some time during the summer, Mr. Greenman preached one Sabbath. Rev. Daniel Lawrence preached one Sabbath in the winter, Rev. Nehemiah Greenman and Rev. Daniel Lawrence one Sabbath each in the spring of 1755, Revs. Messrs. Lawrence and Andrew Hunter one Sabbath each the succeeding winter, Rev. Henry Martin one Sabbath in the summer of 1756, and Mr. Greenman one Sabbath the succeeding winter. There were no supplies then until the fall of 1758 when Messrs. Andrew Hunter, Nehemiah Greenman, Daniel Lawrence and William Ramsey were appointed to supply each one Sabbath during the ensuing winter, either at Woodbury or Timber Creek, so that each place shall have equal shares. Rev. Mr. Hunter supplied the church one Sabbath in the summer of 1756, and Mr. Hunter and Mr. Ramsay one Sabbath each in the winter. After this there were no supplies until 1762, when Mr. Martin and Mr. Ramsay supplied the church each one Sabbath. In 1764 Rev. Henry Martin served the church one Sabbath, and Rev. John Brainerd two. Nov. 7, 1764, a supplication went from the church for supplies and the administration of the Lord's Supper. In answer thereto Presbytery appointed the following supplies: Mr. Hunter one Sabbath, Mr. Brainerd two, Mr. Lawrence one, and Mr. Ramsay one, and Mr. Brainerd and Mr. Hunter to administer the sacrament in the spring, if the way be clear. Rev. Charles Beatty supplied the church one Sabbath, and Rev. John Brainerd three Sabbaths during May and June, 1765. The Presbytery of Philadelphia met here July 30 of this year, and in the fall Revs. John Brainerd and Mr. Williams supplied one Sabbath each. In the spring of 1766 Mr. Chesnutt supplied the church one Sabbath, the first time since November, 1753. In the summer Rev. John Brainerd supplied one Sabbath.

During this year Mr. Chesnutt was sent by the Synod

of New York and Philadelphia to the southern colonies on important business.

In October of this year an application was made to the Presbytery for one-half of Mr. Brainerd's labor, and for his pastoral charge of the congregation in that proportion. As Mr. Brainerd was a missionary of the Honorable Society in Scotland, they left the matter to him and them. Mr. Brainerd did not accept the charge. In April, 1767, an application was made to the Presbytery by Timber Creek and parts adjacent that Mr. Chesnutt might be sent to them in order to settlement. Mr. Chesnutt had returned from the southern colonies. He was willing to come back, and so Presbytery requested the congregation of Timber Creek to make out a call for his services and whatever else may be necessary for his accommodation and support. He was also appointed supply at Woodbury and Longacoming in such a proportion as may be agreed upon among themselves, and that each of those places may unite in their call proposed. May 25th of this year a call was brought to the Presbytery, signed by the principal members of the congregations of Timber Creek and Longacoming for Mr. Chesnutt to take the pastoral charge of them, but as there were none from Woodbury attending the meeting, or who had their names affixed to that call, although it was expected that they would unite with the other congregations in being a part of Mr. Chesnutt's charge, the Presbytery thought that the way was not yet clear to proceed in that matter, and therefore referred it to their next meeting and in the meantime appointed him to preach and perform pastoral duties to the people in full proportion as shall be agreed upon by them. Without any further action by the Presbytery, Mr. Chesnutt took charge of the field and labored here, and at Woodbury, until his death July 21, 1775.

In the year 1765, October 18, the parsonage property on the Woodbury road, about three-fourths of a mile from the church, was bought for the use and the support and main-

tenance of the minister, who was always to have the right to obtain from it whatever he needed or desired.

It was sold by David Morgan to Michael Fisher, Esq., David Roe, Lazarus Pine, Peter Cheesman, Randal W. Morgan, Samuel Blackwood and Abraham Roe, October 18, 1765, for the sum of one hundred and sixty-five pounds proclamation money, "under this trust and confidence, that these men shall and will from time to time, and at all times hereafter, permit and suffer the Minister and Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Timber Creek to receive and take the rents, issues and profits of the said estate, to and for the use, support and maintenance of such minister, who shall be duly approved of and appointed by the First Presbytery of Philadelphia; and also to sell and convey the same at such time and in such manner as the said Ministers and Elders, for the time being, or the major part of them, shall direct and appoint by instrument under their hand and seal."

Express provision was made, both in this deed and in the one given by John Blackwood, that the property should never be used for the benefit of any other society than the Presbyterian.

The purchase of this property, however, brought about a contention between this congregation and Woodbury, which resulted in a petition being sent to Presbytery by the people of Timber Creek, requesting Presbytery "to take them under their care, which they explained to mean in regard to their union with Woodbury and to include a disunion from them in some things, wherein they have been considered in connection."

Names of the petitioners: Lazarus Pine, Peter Cheesman, Samuel Perce, Randal Morgan, Isaac Flaningam, David Morgan, Richard Cheesman, Richard Cheesman, Jr., John Walling, Uriah Cheesman, Christopher Sickler, John Hedger, Jonathan Wilkins, Peter x String, Richard Cheesman, younger, Richard Smallwood, Israel Williams^o, John Williams, Robert Maffett, William Jolly, Randal

Marshall, Thomas Nightingale, Patrick Flanigan, Isaac § Dilkes, George Morgan, Abraham Morgan, Benjamin * Brown, John Rodgers, James Perce, William Perce, Jacob † Burch, Samuel Wild, William w Kidd.

In answer to which, Presbytery could only say that as there were no commissioners from Woodbury, and the minutes of the committee appointed to settle the matter were not present, they would defer it to their next meeting. The whole difference was afterwards amicably adjusted by the two congregations on the following basis : .

1st. "That the congregations at the head of Timber creek and Woodbury be considered as separate congregations, under the pastoral care of one minister.

2d. "That Timber Creek and Woodbury, though separate congregations, have but one session.

3d. "That each congregation choose their own officers and keep separate subscriptions, and have equal service of the ministerial labors of their minister.

4th. "That the parsonage entirely belong to the congregation at the head of Timber Creek, and what money Woodbury people have given or may give towards the parsonage land or building the house thereon, shall be repaid by Timber Creek people again when Woodbury people shall purchase a parsonage or build a house."

This was in November, 1770.

A house was built on this property, in which Mr. Chesnut lived until the end of his ministry.

Lazarus Pine, whose name is the first on the petition to Presbytery, was a trustee in 1751, and seems to have held that office until his death, in 1796. He was a commissioner to Presbytery more than once to plead for supplies for the church during the years when it had no minister, and seems to have been the chief man in bringing about the settlement of the differences between the congregations of Timber Creek and Woodbury. After his forty-five years of labor and anxiety for this church he fell on sleep, and rests in the graveyard adjoining this church

with the pastor, from whose lips he had so often heard the word of life.

During the eight years of Mr. Chesnutt's second ministry to this church, the congregation enjoyed the regular services of the sanctuary and the pastoral care of the man, who, in the good providence of God, had been the means of establishing the church in the beginning, but the time came for him to lay aside his work and go to his rest and reward, and so the body worn out let go its hold upon the spirit and it was quietly placed in its little chamber of rest to await the resurrection summons in the last day.

This whole region at that time was under Presbyterian influence. Indeed, there was no other church in this vicinity for many years after the gathering together of the Presbyterian congregation in 1750. Almost, if not quite all, the efforts put forth to supply the destitute in these regions with the gospel were put forth by the Presbyterian Church, which was then and is still a great missionary church.

The death of Mr. Chesnutt occurred at a time of great peril for the congregation. Days of trial and adversity were approaching, days of war and anxiety, and the congregation, left without a minister, declined and finally became almost extinct.

How sad the change ! How often the few that were left must have looked back to the days when the services of God's house were enjoyed regularly ; when the sweet invitations of God's love, the blessed hope of heaven through the atonement of a Saviour, were uttered by the man of God. How often the cry of the Psalmist must have been on their lips : " As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God ; when shall I come and appear before God ? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God ? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me ; for I had gone with the multitude ; I went with them to

the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy-day."

The deprivation of regular services was not the only sorrow these persons had to grieve over; the place had become entirely demoralized, so that, according to Mr. Everitt, "drunkenness, rioting, profanity, and the debasing sports of the course and the ring abounded. It is even said that travelers feared to pass this way because of deeds of violence that had been perpetrated." Dark, dark days indeed, for the handful of Christians that was left.

Once during this time efforts were made to secure a regular supply, in 1779, May 21, when Mr. Pine requested the Presbytery that Mr. Greenman might be sent to them to preach one-fourth of his time at Woodbury and Timber Creek; but Mr. Greenman died soon after meeting of Presbytery.

According to a statement of Miss Amy Jaggard, who heard it from her father one Sunday, during the stormy days of the Revolution, Rev. John Brainerd preached a patriotic sermon in the old church from Psalm 144, 1: "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight." It stirred the patriotic feelings of the congregation and led to several enlisting in the Continental army.

Mr. Hunter, who supplied the two congregations oftener than any other minister, was appointed in 1781 a chaplain in the Continental army, and thus they were deprived of his labors.

In 1786, Mr. Hunter was requested by Presbytery to supply Woodbury and Timber Creek as often as he could.

In 1787, this request was again made. After this he settled at Woodbury, giving a portion of his time to this place. The number of families in the Woodbury congregation about 1798, as ascertained from an old report to Presbytery, was thirty, an increase of ten upon Mr. Chesnutts' time. This report was evidently made by Mr. Hunter. It is on file among the old papers belonging to the Pres-

bytery of Philadelphia. Nothing is said of Timber Creek, and the families belonging to the congregation here must either have been included in that number, or they were so few that Mr. H. thought it not worth while to mention them. The whole report is as follows: "The church of Woodbury was formed by about ten families in the year 1732, and was occasionally supplied by the Rev. Mr. Andrews, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Evans, of Pittsgrove. Mr. Chesnutt was the first settled minister, under whose ministration the church increased to about twenty families. Between the time of his death, in 1775, and the year 1786, the number of Presbyterians diminished. Since the year 1786 they have increased so that they are now about thirty families." But the membership of the church must have been small, very small indeed, as in the year 1801, some years later, there were only eight communicants on the whole field, embracing Woodbury and Timber Creek.

Mr. Hunter was one of the members of the convention that met at Trenton, December, 1787, to ratify the Constitution of the United States. He was a very earnest patriot and always ready to respond to the call of his country for any service he could render.

In 1797 Mr. Hunter removed from the field and the congregation had to depend again upon occasional supplies for two years. Presbytery then appointed as occasional supplies Revs. Messrs. Nathaniel Harris, John Davenport, Uriah Dubois, Ethan Osborn, Samuel Leacock, William Clarkson and Dr. William M. Tennent.

During this period the church worshipped in the little log building erected in the beginning of Mr. Chesnutt's ministry, but owing to want of care, at the end of forty-five years it was almost ready to fall to pieces. The floor was nearly all gone, the door was off its hinges, and most of the windows were out. According to the statement of an old lady, Mrs. Ann Pine, who died in 1872, aged eighty-seven years, the school children at recess made the old building their place for play in 1800 and 1801. Ac-

according to our present ideas it was never a very comfortable building to sit in ; the seats were slabs placed upon wooden blocks, without any backs ; there was no stove and consequently no fire. Atmospheric warmth was not considered conducive to piety. It was thought that it rendered the worshippers weak and nerveless and languid and so prevented an earnest worship.

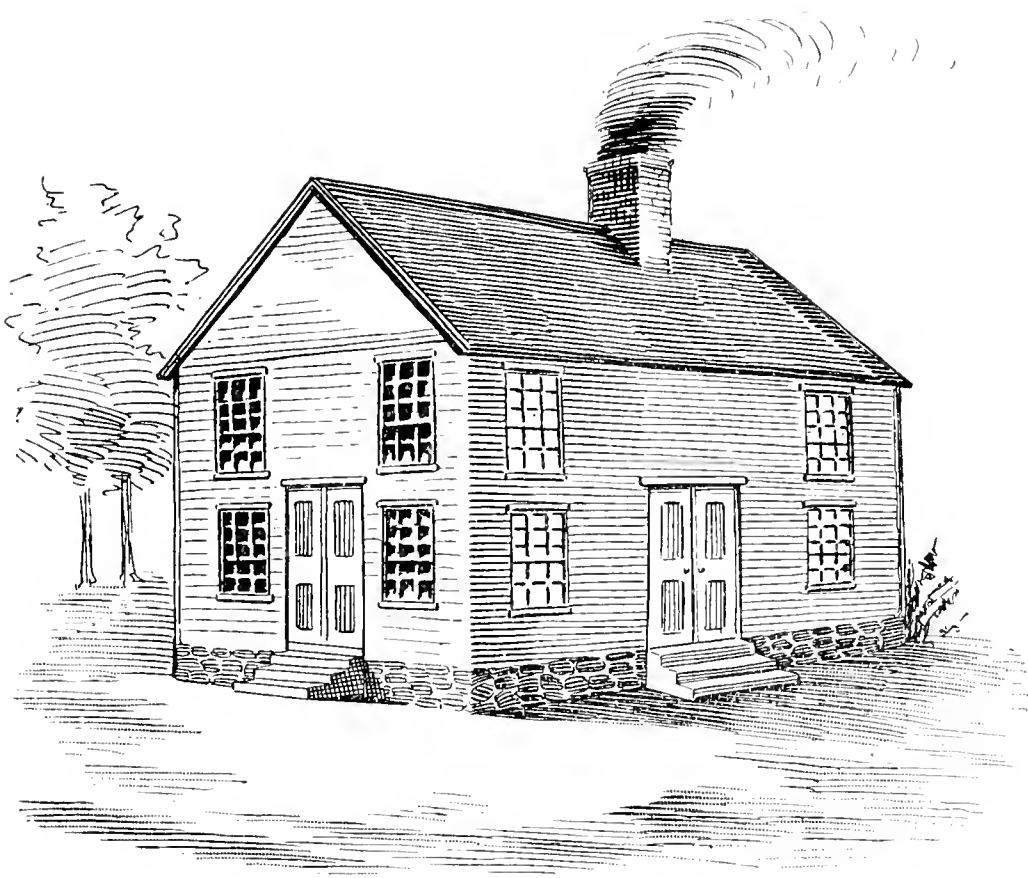
Up to 1799 only two Ruling Elders are known to have been ordained over the joint congregations of Woodbury and Timber Creek, John Sparks and Elijah Clark. Mr. Sparks was elected before 1768, but in what year we cannot tell, as there is no record of it, but in that year he represented the churches in the Synod of Philadelphia. He is found as an Elder also at the meetings of the Presbytery in 1773, November 3 ; 1791, April 19 ; 1796, October 18 ; 1797, October 7 ; 1801, October 20. His death occurred in 1802, February 18. He was a man of prominence in the county. With Michael Fisher, another prominent member of the Presbyterian Church, and others, he was appointed on a committee, in 1763, to dispose of the fire arms of the county. In 1775, when the people of this country were aroused to protest against the oppressive measures of the English Government, he was chosen one of the committee of correspondence of Gloucester county. That committee called a meeting of the inhabitants of the county to choose members to attend a meeting of the Provincial Congress that was to be held in Trenton, May 22. Mr. Sparks, Elijah Clark, who was afterwards, in 1788, elected a Ruling Elder of the churches, and five others were chosen. Messrs. Sparks and Clark were both present at the session of that Congress and assisted to pass the resolution to raise one or more companies of militia in each township or corporation. At a later session that year, when both men were present, it was resolved to raise twenty-six regiments and levy a tax of £10,000 for their support and for other war expenses. In the second Provincial Congress, which commenced its

session October 3, 1775, Elijah Clark was a member, outspoken in his utterances for separation from what was then called the mother country. In the third Provincial Congress, which met at Burlington, June, 1776, and later in the month at Trenton, both John Sparks and Elijah Clark were present. At this session the delegates to the Continental Congress were appointed and instructed to support the just rights and liberties of America, and if necessary join the other delegates in a declaration of independence. During the sessions of this Congress, Mr. Clark returned to his home to look after the raising of companies to defend the country from the British army, resigning his seat November 6, 1777, to become Lieutenant-Colonel of the second battalion of a regiment of militia raised in old Gloucester county, of which Camden county was then part. Mr. Sparks remained to attend to the important duties of his position as a member of that Provincial Congress. On July 2, 1776, two days before the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress, this Provincial Congress of New Jersey adopted a constitution for the State, in which is this statement, "that all authority under George III is at an end, and freedom to worship God can never be taken away." Mr. Sparks gave all his influence to the cause of liberty until it was accomplished and a free nation established west of the Atlantic ocean.

Colonel Clark continued in active service during the war. With Mr. Richard Westcott he built a fort near the port of Little Egg Harbor, probably Tuckerton. At that time his home was at the forks of the Little Egg Harbor river, near the present village of Batsto, from which place he moved to a residence near what is now called Barrington, where the late Charles Willitts lived. This must have been after the war. Before moving he built a little meeting house at the forks of the Little Egg Harbor, where some of the most noted and most devoted ministers of the Presbyterian Church held service. After his elec-

tion as an Elder of the churches of Woodbury and Timber Creek, he took an active part in everything that related to the church up to the time of his death. He was one of the commissioners elected by the Presbytery of Philadelphia to the first meeting of the General Assembly, and was elected to the same position in the years 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794. He was present at almost every session of Presbytery from 1789 to 1795.

In 1798, October 10, on a supplication sent from Woodbury for the services of Rev. Thomas Picton, the Presbytery appointed him to supply Woodbury and Timber Creek at his own discretion for the next six months. Then, having received a call from the united congregations, he was ordained 1799, June 13, in Philadelphia, and installed pastor at Woodbury, October 18. Whether there were any members of the church living here at that time it is impossible to say, as the records are very imperfect. At a celebration of the Lord's Supper, in Woodbury, December 29, 1799, the first celebration, it is said, since Mr. Chesnutt's time, only eight persons partook of the memorials of a Savior's love, and not one of them from this congregation. It is to be feared that of the original number of members of Timber Creek church, not one was left, the light was entirely extinguished; nevertheless, in the hearts of some, though not professors of faith in Christ, there must have been some cravings after the blessed truths of the gospel, or the services of the minister of Christ would not have been sought after. It may have been that if there were any members here they thought the journey to Woodbury too great to go to worship there. The names of those who partook of the Sacrament at that time are: Rev. Thomas Picton, pastor of the united congregations; Rev. John Davenport, pastor of Deerfield church; John Sparks, elder; Charles Ogden, elected elder the month before; Mrs. Ruth Sparks, Mrs. Mary Selard, originally of Greenwich church, Cumberland county, Mrs. Ann Davenport and Mrs. Sarah Carl. In 1801, June 4, a



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BLACKWOOD, N. J. ERECTED 1801.

meeting of session was held in the church at Blackwoodtown, the first mention of that name. Mr. Picton and Mr. Charles Ogden, Elder, were present. Mrs. Powell, first name not given, presented herself for admission to the church, and was received. Thus the church again commenced its work in this community. Mr. Picton served the churches five years, and then, on account of inadequate support, he had to leave and go to another field. The people were sorry to part with him, but felt unable to support him. Mr. Picton was a very large man and quite a learned one, and was greatly respected by the citizens of the community. He did not, however, seem to have any power to win souls to Christ. With the exception of Mrs. Powell, there was not an addition to this church during his ministry of five years. It may have been that the community had become so demoralized during the time of the war that the people had not recovered from it. Rev. B. S. Everitt, D. D.; in his historical sermon, says, "The community had sunk to a very low depth of degradation, and drunkenness and rioting and profanity and debasing sports abounded." During the ministry of Mr. Picton, a new church was built to take the place of the old log church that had gone to decay. The new one stood a little in the rear of this present building, and was used as a place of worship until the front part of the present edifice was put up in 1848, a very commodious little church, where much good service was done for the cause of Christ. In the erection of this building, in 1801, Mr. James Jaggard, the grandfather of Messrs. Robert and John Jaggard, of our township, took the most active part. He was assisted by Messrs. R. W. Morgan, Charles Fisher and Samuel Pierce. It is most likely that Mr. Jaggard was a member of the church, although his name is not recorded. His daughter, Miss Amy Jaggard, who joined the church in 1827, and who remained a faithful, consistent member of the church during her whole life, dying in 1872, said that she always considered her father a member of the

church. He kept all the records of the church, but these were all lost in the destruction of his house by fire. Mr. Jaggard was a regular attendant and a liberal supporter of the church up to the time of his death. He used to ride to church on horseback with his daughter, Amy, on a pillion behind him—the old-fashioned way of traveling. It may be interesting to know the names and the places of residence of the inhabitants of the village at the beginning of the century. Mr. Jonathan Pine, the father of Mr. Benjamin Pine, of this village, a short time before he died, in 1876, gave me the information. They are :

Isaac Kay, who owned the grist mill and lived near it.

David Eldridge, whose house and store were on the southwest corner of Main and Church streets, now the residence and store of Mr. Josiah Wood.

Hannah Boggs, who lived on the northeast corner of the same streets.

Samuel Pierce, wheelwright, just above the graveyard.

Priscilla Hamilton, near the residence of Mr. Jonas Livermore.

Jesse King, near the residence of the late Mr. Gerard Wood.

Robert Chew, owner of the tavern, who lived where Mr. Martin Williams now lives.

Joseph Williams, blacksmith, on the site of the house of the late Mr. Richard Stafford.

David Beckly, near the residence of Mrs. George Jones.

Trial Westcott, where Mr. R. C. Morgan lives.

Samuel Cheesman, where the store of Mr. Williams stands.

John Morgan, on the site of Mrs. Synnott's residence.

John Morgan, the second of that name, where the house belonging to the church stands. At his house those who helped to raise the frame of the church, in 1801, took dinner.

William Farrar, where Mr. Godfrey lives. At this

house Rev. Nathaniel Todd, pastor of the church from 1808 to 1815, sometimes held service.

After the resignation of Mr. Picton, the church was for four years without a pastor. During the rest of the year, 1804, occasional services were held by Revs. George C. Potts, David Edwards and Dr. Tennent. In 1805 only one service is reported at Blackwoodtown, conducted by Dr. Blair. In 1806 services were held thirteen Sabbaths, by the following ministers: Revs. John Clark, James Boyd, John Davenport, Ethan Osborne, Jonathan Freeman, Abijah Davis, James P. Wilson. In 1807, Revs. Abijah Davis, Archibald Alexander, John Jones, Jonathan Freeman, James Boyd, John Clark and Ethan Osborne conducted the services, amounting to twelve. In the year 1808, up to May, five services were held, the following ministers conducting them: Revs. John Jones, an evangelist; Bradford Marcy, of Pittsgrove; Dr. Tennent, of Abington, and Dr. Wilson, of the First Church, Philadelphia. In May, Rev. Nathaniel Todd was secured to minister to the two churches. He acted as Stated Supply until May, 1809, when he was installed pastor. Mr. Todd came from the Presbytery of Albany. There is nothing on record respecting his pastorate. He is reported to have had excellent preaching abilities and a wonderful gift in prayer. So remarkable were his prayers, that many of the Society of Friends attended the service of the church to have their hearts carried up to the throne of God on the wings of these prayers. In the month of October, 1815, at his own request, he was released from the pastorate by Presbytery, the trouble being the old one of inadequate support. He went to Easton, Maryland, to take charge of an academy.

Rev. William Rafferty, from the Presbytery of Hudson, presented himself as a candidate for the pastorate of the two churches, in 1816. He was received by the Presbytery of Philadelphia May 17, 1816, and was installed pastor June 25. He remained until the winter of 1818-19

when he left them and went to Annapolis without leave of Presbytery. At his request, and the request of the churches, the pastoral relation was dissolved. At the session of Presbytery at Pittsgrove, October 21, 1819, Mr. Rafferty, for long and frequent absence from Presbytery and leaving his charge without permission, was cited to appear before Presbytery at the next stated meeting. At that meeting, April 19, 1820, Mr. Rafferty reported that he had connected himself with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, whereupon it was resolved "that, although he had departed himself in an irregular manner, yet the Presbytery deemed it inexpedient, considering the circumstances of the case, to censure him, and do hereby declare his connection hitherto subsisting in the Presbytery to be dissolved."

Mr. Rafferty was an Irishman, an excellent scholar and a good doctor, quite flowery in his speech and attractive as a preacher.

For several years the church had to depend upon supplies, which were, however, more frequently furnished them. The following ministers were sent: Revs. Drs. James P. Wilson and Jacob J. Janeway and Messrs. George Chandler, Thomas H. Skinner, Jonathan Freeman, Thomas J. Biggs, James K. Burch, Charles Hodge, George W. Janvier, Francis G. Ballantyne, Robert Steel, Robert B. Belville, Drs. Ezra S. Ely, William Neill, and Messrs. C. Ogden, John W. Scott, Joseph H. Jones, William Ashmead, George C. Potts, Joseph Barr, William M. Engles, Nicholas Patterson, John H. Vancourt and John H. Kennedy, each holding one or two services.

In 1822, August 31, a meeting of the church at Woodbury was held, at which there were fourteen male members of Woodbury congregation and one from Blackwoodtown, Mr. Samuel Pierce. Mr. Pierce proposed to the meeting that in the event of the settlement of a minister at this place he would undertake for one year to pay one hundred dollars as a part of his salary, provided he will

preach at the church in Blackwoodtown in the forenoon of every third Sabbath. This proposition was unanimously acceded to. This shows, however, that this congregation had fallen in numbers and ability very far below what it was in Mr. Chesnutt's time, when it enjoyed his ministrations one-half of the time. Mr. Pierce, who made the proposition from Blackwoodtown, was at this time the most active member of the church. His house near Almonesson, not far from the crossing of the Clement's Bridge road with the old road to Woodbury, where the late Mr. James Pierce lived, was the stopping place for all the Presbyterian ministers who traveled between Blackwoodtown and Woodbury. He was elected in 1827 an Elder of this church, but died the same year, before his ordination. The date of his reception into the church is not recorded, nor that of John Goddard and Margaret Goddard, all of whom were members of the church before 1821. Rev. Ira Ingraham, who came from Addison Association, Congregational, in the State of Vermont, and was received into the Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1823, October 22, became the Stated Supply, having commenced the previous June. His salary was \$600. Previous to this time the churches had given a call to Rev. John Kennedy, of Belfast, Ireland, who had been permitted to preach within the bounds of the Presbytery, but he declined it. At the end of six months Mr. Ingraham removed to New York, and was afterwards dismissed to Londonderry Presbytery, whose churches were principally in New Hampshire.

In the beginning of the year 1824, the Woodbury church became so disheartened that they contemplated disbanding and uniting with the Episcopal Church at Clarksboro. Dr. Joseph Fithian, so long an earnest and devoted member and elder of the church at Woodbury, felt that the church ought not to be given up, and wrote to Rev. Archibald Alexander, of Princeton, stating the deplorable condition of the church, and asking him to send a minister to them. A

committee consisting of E. D. Woodruff and Robert L. Armstrong, was afterwards appointed by the congregation to confer with Drs. Alexander and Miller, for the supply of the pulpit. This correspondence and conference resulted in getting the services of Rev. Joseph H. Jones for one year. He commenced his ministry June 1, 1824. His labors were crowned with success. We cannot tell how many were added to the Woodbury church, but to this church there were added six on profession of their faith in Christ—Mrs. Rebecca Pierce, Martha Pierce, Elizabeth Dotterer, Rebecca Chew, Sarah Pierce and Eleanor Morgan—making a church of nine members. Three months after the arrival of Mr. Jones on the field, Charles Ogden, the only Elder of the two churches, died. He had seen all the severe struggles of the two little churches for existence during twenty-five years and the almost hopeless attempt to maintain them. Just on the dawn of their successful life he passed away to become one of the members of the church in heaven, where struggles and disappointments are not known. At the end of his year, Mr. Jones signified his intention to leave and to go to New Brunswick, to become pastor of the Presbyterian Church there. Mr. Jones afterwards became Dr. Jones, and after several successful pastorates was chosen corresponding secretary of the Board of Relief for Disabled Ministers, in which position he did excellent work for the worn out servants of the church. He never lost his interest in this church. Regularly, he made an annual visit, to the delight of all the people. During his ministry, December 21, 1824, Henry Roe and William Tatem were elected Ruling Elders of the two churches and were ordained by Rev. Joseph H. Jones, assisted by Rev. John W. Scott.

Rev. Sylvester Scovel, a member of the Presbytery of Albany, who was stopping at the house of Dr. Fithian at this time, was immediately invited to take charge of the churches. A committee was appointed to wait on him. They met in the County Clerk's office several days after and

agreed to invite him to serve the two churches, at a salary of four hundred and fifty dollars. As Mr. Scovel had gone to New York the committee sent the invitation by mail. Mr. Scovel answered it, saying that he would accept the invitation and commence his labors June 1. The churches found it difficult to raise the amount of salary they had offered and were obliged to apply to the Board of Home Missions for assistance. A grant of one hundred dollars was made by the Board. This, with three hundred from Woodbury and one hundred from Blackwoodtown, made Mr. Scovel's salary five hundred dollars, when he got it, which was not always the case. He remained in charge three years and three months and then left September 1, 1828. He was never installed pastor, but was Stated Supply. During his ministry twelve were added to the church: Major Peter Cheesman, Mrs. Sarah Cheesman, Miss Sarah Ann Cheesman, Mrs. Margaret Pierce, Miss Amy Jaggard, Mrs. Beulah Elkinton Wilkins, Mrs. Sophia Charles, Mrs. Elizabeth Morgan, Mrs. Matilda Ashton Jaggard, Mrs. Hannah Zane, Mrs. Cynthia Ann Jaggard and Miss Sarah Ann Marshall. Two members died during Mr. Scovel's ministry, one was dismissed to a sister church and one was suspended. The membership of the church was nineteen when Mr. Scovel left. In 1828, May 3, Major Peter Cheesman was ordained Elder over this church, thus giving it an entirely separate organization from Woodbury, and better preparing it for its great work. For about seventy-seven years it and Woodbury had been under one session, but now each felt the necessity of being independent and reaching out to larger work for the Master. Major Cheesman acted as a member of the session until June 31, 1834. After that his name does not appear in the minutes of the church. At his own request he was dismissed to the Williamstown Church, June 29, 1844. The churches did not want to part with Mr. Scovel, for he was a very earnest and eloquent preacher, but he felt that he must go. He was the

father of Rev. Sylvester Scovel, D. D., President of the University of Wooster, Ohio, and Hon. James M. Scovel, the distinguished lawyer and orator, of Camden, N. J., and grandfather of Hon. H. S. Scovel, of Haddonfield, lately a member of the House of Assembly of this State.

Rev. David R. Preston, of Philadelphia, was the next minister, commencing his work on the departure of Mr. Scovel. He remained only seven Sabbaths, leaving October 20, 1828.

Mr. J. D. Pickands, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, supplied the church the next twelve months. There is no record of the results of his ministry, which ceased October 25, 1829.

Rev. Charles Williamson, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Philadelphia also, was secured as a stated supply after the departure of Mr. Pickands. His compensation was six dollars per Sabbath. After preaching about a month a call was made out for him by the churches, Woodbury promising three hundred dollars a year and Blackwoodtown one hundred dollars. The call was accepted, and he was installed pastor of the two churches at Woodbury, January 14, 1830. He continued his work until October 26, 1836, when because of inadequate support he left, the churches being in arrears to him one hundred and fifty dollars. During his ministry twelve were received into the church—Randal W. Morgan, Samuel Coles, Mrs. Sarah Morgan, Mrs. Mary Ann Coles, Miss Margaretta Rambo, Mrs. Mercy Locke, Mrs. Rebecca Dotterer, Daniel Buck, Miss Elizabeth North, Miss Anna Maria Foster, Miss Anna Northrup and Charles Stevenson. Of all those received into the church up to the time of the close of Mr. Williamson's ministry not one is living.

Mr. Williamson was a large man, and though easy of disposition, was very conservative. He was one of the signers of the famous protest against the decision of Presbytery permitting the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia to prosecute a call before the Presbytery of Eliza-

bethtown for the services of Rev. Albert Barnes; the commencement of a contest that finally succeeded in rending the church into two parties—Old School and New School, which rent, however, was happily healed in 1869.

During this ministry, Mr. Randal W. Morgan was elected and ordained Elder, August 10, 1834, and served the church faithfully and honorably fourteen years, when he passed to his reward.

In 1834, the owner of the Good Intent property put up a house of worship on the hill back of the store at Good Intent, and in this building Rev. Charles Williamson and his successor, Rev. Samuel Blythe, preached part of the time. The building was afterwards given to the Baptists, who removed it and put it up on its present site.

About 1832, a Sunday-school was organized in the mill at Good Intent by Mr. Jonas Livermore, who had come from Massachusetts in 1830. When the church on the hill was built, the Sunday-school was removed thither, and was held there until it was taken to the old Presbyterian Church, which stood in the rear of the present one.

The next pastor was the Rev. Samuel D. Blythe. After preaching a few times for the churches, a call was made out for him, which he accepted. He commenced his work July 4, 1837, and was installed pastor August 20, 1838. His salary was eight hundred dollars, five hundred from Woodbury, and three hundred from Blackwoodtown. Immediately previous to his coming to this field, he was pastor of the Seventh Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. He was a Kentuckian by birth, and had the vigor and earnestness and eloquence that the natives of that State are said to have. His health having failed him in his city pastorate, he thought a change to the country would benefit him, and so he accepted the call to these churches. During his ministry of six years the two churches grew rapidly. About a month after the beginning of his ministry, Mr. Jonas Livermore, who had come from Massachusetts in

1830, was received as a communicant member, and in the month of September he and Mr. Samuel Coles were elected Ruling Elders, and the next month both were ordained and installed.

Mr. Blythe was too hard a worker for one with so weak a physical frame. He not only preached twice regularly every Sunday, at Woodbury in the morning and here in the afternoon, but taught in the academy at Woodbury through the week, and delivered numerous temperance lectures in different parts of the county. He was a very able and eloquent speaker, and drew large numbers to hear him. But the work was too much for him, and so the body gave out, and he passed to his reward and to the rest that remaineth for the people of God, June 23, 1843, aged only thirty-seven years. His labors were greatly blessed of God, and were the means of firmly establishing the church in this community. Thirty-four members were received into this church by him, of whom only one, Mr. Livermore, remains with us.

During the ministry of Mr. Blythe the Presbytery of West Jersey was formed in 1839, he being one of the constituent members.

Of the two Ruling Elders ordained and installed by Mr. Blythe, Mr. Coles held the office until the day of his death, January 25, 1853, a man greatly esteemed by the church. Mr. Livermore is still with us, having been a member and an Elder sixty-one years. He is, although ninety-six years old, vigorous and sound in body and in mind, and the most regular attendant upon the services of the church. It is a rare thing to find his place vacant, either in the Sabbath congregation or the weekly prayer meeting. He has been a most liberal supporter of the church. For seventeen years he was the superintendent of the Sunday-school, and for seventeen years more he was a teacher. It is impossible to tell the value of this Sunday-school organization to the church through these years. God's truth has been instilled into hundreds, yes, thou-

sands of young people, to the building up of their spiritual character and the better fitting them for the performance of life's duties here and for the service of God here and hereafter. The successors in the superintendency of the Sunday-school are George Jones, H. K. Bugbee, Rev. B. S. Everitt, D. D., Rev. Charles Wood, D. D., Charles Pier-son, Rev. F. R. Brace, D. D., Samuel N. Chase, Frederic H. Bateman and Elmer E. Wilson.

Just one year prior to Mr. Blythe's settlement there came to this section, locating at what was called Spring Mills, now Grenloch, Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Bateman and family from Connecticut, and the year after, the same year that Mr. Blythe came, Mr. and Mrs. William Bate-man and family, both families soon uniting with the church, adding greatly to its strength.

In September, 1839, the total membership of the church was fifty-three. As the membership of the church in-creased, the people began to think of the propriety of having a minister who should give all his time to this church. The interests of the Redeemer's kingdom seemed to them to require it; and although not strong in numbers or in pecuniary ability, they finally determined to undertake the work of supporting a minister, who should devote himself to this particular field. Ninety-two years they had been connected with Woodbury. They each had needed the help of the other, but now each was strong enough to go alone, and so the separa-tion took place. It was necessary for the growth of each church. Independence is necessary for the growth and perfection of every body, whether physical or spiritual. It cannot reach up to a condition where the full powers of an organized body can be used without it. It was a very wise action taken by this church when it deter-mined to go alone. Its success since then has proven its wisdom. The church was not strong financially at that time, but the members had the right spirit.

The services of Rev. John Burtt were secured March

19, 1843. He labored here sixteen years, breaking to the people the bread of life. He helped to lay a solid foundation for the church to build upon. Some here still remember his clear, forcible presentations of divine truth. He was a Scotchman by birth and possessed the acute, analytical reasoning mind of the Scotch. In the beginning of his ministry he preached at Salem, N. J. He afterwards was one of the founders of *The Presbyterian*, a sterling religious newspaper still coming to our households. One of his sons is doing earnest work for the Master in the upper part of this state. During his service of sixteen years seventy persons were received into the church. There were sixty-two communicant members when Mr. Burttt left. Of them only seven are still with us. In the year 1848, Mr. Burttt signified to the Session his desire to leave, but after due consideration it was thought best that he should continue his labors, provided the church would proceed to the erection of a new edifice for public worship. This was agreed upon and Mr. Burttt remained. Ground south of the church property was purchased from Hurff Woodrow, on Church street, and the same year a stone edifice erected, the front part of the present building. It was occupied the succeeding winter. A residence or manse for the minister was commenced in 1854 and finished in 1855, and then occupied by Mr. Burttt. This faithful man of God continued to serve the church until the spring of 1859, when, on account of failing health, he requested the consent of Session to the resignation of his relation as stated supply. His resignation was accepted, whereupon he removed to Salem, N. J., the place of his first ministerial labors, residing there until the time of his death, in 1866.

Of the seventy persons who were received into the church, only six are with us now. The others have died or been dismissed to other churches. Mr. William Stevenson was elected and ordained a Ruling Elder June 18, 1848. After having served the church faith-

fully for thirty-one years, he fell on sleep. Messrs. Samuel Eckel and Charles Stevenson were elected Ruling Elders March 27, 1852. Mr. Eckel served the church less than two years, God having called him to the church above January 15, 1854. Mr. Charles Stevenson served in the eldership thirty-seven years, always faithful and devoted to the welfare of the church where he had worshipped for over fifty years. The last few years of his life he resided in Camden. They were years of failing health and great feebleness, but he was always sustained by an unfaltering trust in God. He died August 1, 1889. Mr. Randal E. Morgan was elected to the eldership March 26, 1854, and continued to serve in this position twenty-six years. His period of service was marked by untiring zeal for the prosperity of the church. In the fall of 1869 he was elected Sheriff of the county and moved with his family to Camden, where he has resided ever since. At his own request he was dismissed to the First Presbyterian Church of Camden, N. J., where he now is a Ruling Elder.

The successor of Mr. Burrtt was Rev. Benjamin S. Everitt, who became pastor June 20, 1859, having been ordained and installed on that day. He was a devoted and energetic servant of Christ, always at work for the Master. He was wonderfully successful in winning souls. One hundred and four persons were added to the church during his ministry of five years, fifty-four of them in the year 1860. Only fifteen of those received are still numbered with us.

The congregation grew so rapidly during his ministry that it was considered necessary to enlarge the church edifice. About eighteen feet were added to it, making the building its present size. This was done in 1861.

Mr. Everitt resigned his pastorate May 15, 1864, and removed to Stroudsburg, where he preached several years. At the close of his pastorate there he returned to New Jersey. His principal field of labor has been Jamesburg,

where he was pastor for more than twenty years. He has been for many years the permanent clerk of the Synod of New Jersey, and in the fall of 1896 was elected its Moderator. He has also had the honorary title of D. D. conferred upon him.

During Dr. Everitt's ministry Mr. David E. Marshall and Mr. Charles E. Pierson were elected Ruling Elders—April 22, 1860. Mr. Pierson acted as Elder until his removal to Woodbury, December 8, 1872. Mr. Marshall served the church in this office until he was cut down by death, July 2, 1877. He was one of the most enterprising men in the community, and one of the most liberal supporters of the church. Although his business was a very extended one, he never allowed it to intrude upon his Sabbath quiet. He was a thorough going Puritan in his observance of the Sabbath. He was also a regular attendant upon the services of the Sabbath and the mid-week meeting; in fact, never out of his place except when prevented by sickness. It is a fact worthy of notice, that faithfulness in the performance of religious duties, in attendance upon the services of the house of God, conscientiously giving God the worship which is his due, acting and dealing honestly with God, as well as with men, are indications of a character that is sure to be successful in any business undertaken. That faithfulness and honesty will be carried into every work and deed and necessarily result in success.

August 16, Rev. Charles Wood became pastor, coming here from Absecon, N. J., a very genial, social man, and a very able preacher. His ministry was blessed with the addition of twenty-two persons to the church, of whom only two are still members of this church. Mr. Wood remained pastor only about two and a half years, and then removed to Brooklyn, to become pastor of City Park Chapel, where he labored most earnestly for the salvation of the perishing for twenty years. He is now an associate pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, New York. His

alma mater conferred the degree of D. D. upon him in the year 1890.

During the pastorates of Drs. Everett and Wood, the Sunday-school grew into a very prosperous condition. The community was in a state of financial prosperity greater than ever before or since, and the population was larger. The Good Intent Mills were in operation, giving employment to a large number of persons, and bringing a large amount of money into the town every week. Since then the mills have stopped running, the population has decreased, and money has been much scarcer.

March 1, 1867, the present pastor commenced his labors. His previous field of labor was in Atlantic county, including Hammonton, Elwood, Pleasant Mills and also Waterford, in Camden county. The thirty years that have passed away have seen joy and sorrow, success and failure. Of the members of the church who greeted me and my family so kindly on my coming here, we have laid to rest forty-seven, most of them earnest and faithful, but they have ceased from their labors and their works do follow them. Only twenty-seven, who were members when I came, are here to-day. Two hundred and fifty-eight persons have been received into the communion of the church, of whom one hundred and thirty-eight are still members, making the membership of the church one hundred and sixty-five. Thirty of those who have been received have died; forty-four have been dismissed to other churches; twenty-eight, who have removed from the place and of whom we know little or nothing, have been placed on a separate roll, and seven have had their names erased from the roll. Thus one hundred and ten persons who have been received during the present pastorate, which closes to-day in its active character, are no longer on our roll. The rite of baptism has been administered to two hundred and seventeen persons, of whom one hundred and thirty-five were adults and eighty-two young children. One hundred and eighty couples have been

united in marriage. Three hundred and twenty-one funeral services have been conducted. Three thousand two hundred sermons have been preached. About two thousand prayer meetings have been held. Sometimes I have preached three sermons on the Lord's Day; sometimes I have preached three times and taught a Bible class beside. Every Sunday, except when on a short vacation of two weeks in the summer, or when I have been ill, and when I went on a trip to the far East, I have either preached three times or preached twice and taught a Bible class or superintended the Sunday-school. During the thirty-one years of my pastorate I have been out of my pulpit about six months altogether from illness, and three months when traveling abroad.

In the year 1873, May 4, Mr. Azariah Eastlack, having been elected a Ruling Elder April 3, to serve three years, was ordained, serving the church during that time. On account of infirm health he declined a re-election. He has passed away to that world where the inhabitants never say they are sick. Mr. Richard B. Stevenson and Mr. Samuel N. Chase were elected Ruling Elders, July 16, 1876, and were ordained July 23 following. Mr. Chase was a faithful and energetic worker in the church, in the Sunday-school, and also in the prayer meeting for many years. After a lingering and very painful illness, he went to the Master whom he had served so faithfully while on earth. Mr. Stevenson is still with us, true to the church, to the pastor, to all his duties.

Two Deacons were elected April 3, and ordained May 4, 1873—Mr. Richard Stevenson and Mr. Van Buren Giffin. Mr. Giffin removed to Atlantic City, and was dismissed to the First Presbyterian Church of that place in 1889.

In 1879, the necessity for a room for Sunday-school purposes and also for prayer meetings and social gatherings pressed itself upon the church, and so an effort was put forth to raise subscriptions to build one. This effort was so successful that in a very short time the work

was commenced. The contract was given to Mr. E. A. Ward to put up the building, the price being seventeen hundred dollars. The size is forty-eight feet by twenty-four feet, with a ceiling eighteen feet in height running across the back part of the church. The work was well done as time testifies. With the furniture the whole cost was a little less than two thousand dollars. The whole amount was raised among the members of the church and congregation, and the Sunday-school room was dedicated free from debt. Rev. V. D. Reed, D. D., at that time pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Camden, preached the dedicatory sermon January 1, 1881. The erection of this building was the last work done by Mr. Ward. He was one of the victims of the terrible Typhus Fever epidemic that raged in the almshouse that winter. Being there attending to some slight repairs, he was seized with the fever and died in a short time.

The Sunday-school, or, as it is generally called, lecture room, has been a great help in the work of the church, and we wonder now how we ever got along without it. The only regret is that we did not make it larger, as it is too small for some of our gatherings. It was said at its dedication: "This is to be a place for religious worship, for mental improvement, for social enjoyment." I think I can say that it has been all this. I think I can truly say that young and old have always been welcome to use it for any of these purposes.

In this year the name of Blackwoodtown was changed to Blackwood.

For many years I felt that the inside walls of the church, which had been plastered on the stone, ought to be stripped. Whenever the weather was cold, and a fire was made in the heater, the warm air, coming in contact with the cold walls condensed the moisture, and it ran down the walls in streams. This not only disfigured the walls, but was injurious to the health of the worshippers. Money was easily raised to make the needed improvement.

The walls were stripped and plastered and the room greatly improved at a cost of about five hundred dollars.

In 1885, many of the members of the church, thinking that the interior of the church looked bare and uninviting, determined to have it frescoed and carpeted. The necessary funds were soon raised. Mr. Bucher, of Salem, was engaged to do the frescoing. He performed it to the entire satisfaction of the church. The floor was also carpeted and the building made more worthy of the congregation that worship in it. This last year another carpet was put down. The spirit of improvement did not stop here, and so the next year the same work was done for the lecture room, at a cost of about two hundred and twenty-five dollars. We have two rooms of which we need not be ashamed.

In 1869, the graveyard not being large enough, a lot of ground adjoining it, with a house on it, was purchased from Mr. Jesse Pratt, for twenty-five hundred dollars. A bequest of two thousand dollars, which was left the church by Mr. E. P. Middleton, but which was reduced to eighteen hundred dollars by reason of an inheritance tax, was, in part, used to pay for it. A debt of one thousand dollars was left on the property in the shape of a mortgage. This was liquidated in part by the payment, in a short time, of one hundred dollars to the widow of Mr. Pratt, and in 1865 by a bequest of Mr. Hiram Wilkins, who left the church five hundred dollars, the interest to be used towards the payment of the pastor's salary. Mr. Wilkins had bought the mortgage. The church received the bequest of Mr. Wilkins and then paid it and the balance to the executors of his estate, and took up the mortgage and had it cancelled. Thirty dollars of the rent from the house on the property are devoted annually towards the payment of the pastor's salary in order to carry out Mr. Wilkins' bequest. Last year another addition was made to the graveyard, as there were no lots for sale in the old part. The ground

adjoining, facing on Church street, was purchased from Mr. Benjamin Williams. Payment has not yet been made, and therefore a debt of four hundred dollars remains. I do not think it need remain long. If some one with a little faith and zeal would go through the congregation, the money could be raised very easily.*

In November, 1887, a Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor was organized. Mr. Elmer Wilson was the first president. This society has been a great help to the church. There has been a development of the spiritual life and spiritual activities of the young members, which has been very gratifying. All of the active members take some part in nearly all of their meetings. Some voices are heard sending up petitions to the dear Saviour, some reading some precious passage from God's word, or the thought of some devoted servant of God, or giving utterance to the thoughts that have been put into their minds by the Spirit of God, whose help they have sought. God has blessed this society from the very beginning, and will continue to bless it if the members only continue faithful and earnest. It is now, and will continue to be, a school in which the members will be trained for the glorious work of the church on earth and the church in heaven. May God's precious and fruitful blessings ever rest upon it.

A Junior C. E. Society has also been formed, and out of it there have been recruits, not only for the older society, but also for the church. A Young People's Band, now called the Foreign Missionary Society, has done a splendid work for the great missionary cause, sending every year about fifty dollars to the Board of Foreign Missions.

More than forty years ago a Ladies' Sewing Society was organized. Its object then was to assist a needy student for the ministry. Since then it has done much work in that line, as well as in raising money for the

*NOTE.—Some wood lots have been sold since March 1, and the amount received is to be paid on the debt.

renovation of the church at various times. It ought to be kept in active service. So long as its splendid activities were used for objects outside of our own community it prospered. God's blessing was upon it, and it was one of the influences to bind the church together in harmonious work.

The benevolence of the church has been manifested during these years. This is one of the best evidences of the true piety of the followers of Jesus Christ, and of their loyalty to him and to his cause. From 1867 to 1876, years of temporal prosperity, the contributions to benevolent causes, outside of our own community, ranged from \$780 to \$1,500 per year. They decreased then to the year 1881, when they amounted to only \$289. They have varied since then between \$336 and \$545. The spirituality and beneficence of the church always go hand in hand. Large giving by the members of the church will always prove Malachi III: 10, to be true. The total amount raised for benevolent causes has been \$18,174. The total amount for congregational purposes, including the salary of the pastor, has been \$42,607.

Besides my work for the church, I have been interested and taken an active part in whatever has been for the benefit of the community, in the education of the children, the erection of your school-house, the helping of young men and young women to a higher education, the building of the railroad, the organization of the fire department, the establishment of a building association. For twenty years I was Superintendent of Public Schools in the county, and had the honor of devising the uniform course of studies for the county, a system which now, under the patronage of the State Board of Education, is in operation in every county of the State, and which has found its way into a large number of the States. I say not these things to boast, but merely to show that my life has been largely given to the church and to the community to help build them up. I know there have been many

imperfections in my work and life—no one knows it as well as I do; but I think I can honestly say, that the chief thought in my mind these thirty-one years has been Christ, the church, the community and the perishing world for which Christ died.

In 1895 the Synod of New Jersey honored me by electing me its moderator.

And now I have run over the history of the church for one hundred and forty-eight years. It has been a very varying one. Sometimes it seemed as though the life of the church would be extinguished, and then it would manifest itself in vigor once more. This day my position as active pastor of this church terminates. The thirty-one years that I have been here seem like a dream, so swiftly have they gone, and yet the prayers that we have joined in sending up to the throne of God, the hymns we have sung together, the word of God that has been read, the sermons that have been preached and heard, have all gone as real, substantial factors into the building up of our real life, which is spiritual, making it better fitted for the service of God here, the service of God hereafter, making each life under the blessing of God a spiritual temple for God to dwell in, a spiritual temple to show forth his power, his wisdom, his love.

What days of joy we have seen together in the various homes and in the church! What bright, beaming eyes when the home or the church has been decorated with flowers and the tones of the organ or piano have sounded out to add to the pleasure, the happiness of those who were about to start out on the journey of life together! What hours of pleasure at our picnics and social gatherings! What seasons of quiet delight by firesides! What seasons of unspeakable joy when in the house of prayer one and another have yielded themselves to the service of Christ! And what days of sadness when the sable wings of the angel of death have darkened the homes and when we have stood by the open grave to lay the beloved ones

where kindly word could never more reach them, where loving hands could never more minister to them ! But they are all gone, yet they have cemented our hearts together in a bond that can never be broken.

Most of the faces that I looked into when I came among you are radiant with the glory of God in the upper sanctuary. Their toils are ended, their work is finished, their battles are fought, their race is run. The white robe covers them, the harp of melody is in their hand, the crown is on their head. You are here to carry on the work that has dropped out of their hands. Be brave, be strong, be faithful, trust God, be liberal, live in love and the blessing of the God of love will ever be upon you. Rally around your new pastor, the one whom you have chosen to be your future leader, pray for him regularly, earnestly. Carry out the pledge you made to God, when you gave yourselves to him, the pledge that you would be true to him, true to the church, faithful in attending all the means of grace, the services and ordinances of God's church, and then when your race is run, not only will the church on earth say "Well done," but heaven will ring with the refrain, "Well done," and the Master himself, he with the brow scarred for you, with the pierced hands and feet for you, will say, with sweetest, most loving voice, "Well done, enter into the joy of the your Lord." May the best, the richest blessings of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest upon you all.

The writer of this review has obtained valuable material from the records of the Presbyteries of New Brunswick, Abington, and Philadelphia, historical sermons of Rev. Allen H. Brown and Rev. B. S. Everitt, D.D., and the Session Book and Congregational Record of the Presbyterian Church of Woodbury, for which he makes due acknowledgment.

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